

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

Acacia amputata, a new Western Australian species
in section *Pulchellae* (Leguminosae: Mimosoideae)

Acacia pulchella R. Br., as defined by Maslin (1975), was excessively polymorphic, and even though *A. fagonioides* Benth. was subsequently removed (Maslin 1979) it remained a broadly circumscribed taxon. The status of *A. pulchella* was re-assessed during the preparation of an account of *Acacia* Mill. (Leguminosae: Mimosoideae) for "Flora of Australia". The acquisition of much new material, especially fruiting specimens, greatly aided this task. It is now seen that *A. pulchella* var. *subsessilis* differs significantly from the other varieties in its carpological features, as well as in inflorescence and vegetative characters. For these reasons it is now considered best to treat it at specific rank. The new species belongs to sect. *Pulchellae* (Benth.) Taub.

Acacia amputata Maslin, *nom. et stat. nov.*

Based on *Acacia pulchella* var. *subsessilis* Maslin, *Nuytsia* 1: 406, figs 4P–S & map 2 (1975). *Type*: Kukerin, Western Australia, 2 September 1934, C.A. Gardner s.n. (*holo*: PERTH00768987; *iso*: CANB, K).

Conservation status. Widespread, not under threat.

Etymology. The epithet is from the Latin *amputo* (to cut away, lop off, shorten), in allusion to the characteristically short peduncles.

Affinities. The carpological features that clearly distinguish *A. amputata* from *A. pulchella* include the following: pods to 15 mm long and undulate to circinate; seeds transverse to oblique and mottled. In *A. pulchella* the pods are 1.5–5 cm long and flat or only slightly undulate; seeds longitudinal and not mottled. Inflorescence characters which generally distinguish the new species from *A. pulchella* include its very short peduncles and heads of 10–20 flowers. An uncommon variant of *A. pulchella* var. *pulchella* from the Busselton–Albany area (to the west of the range of *A. amputata*) has similar inflorescences but it is recognized by its green pinnules, longer glands (1–2 mm), slender spines, aristate bracteoles, longitudinal and non-mottled seeds, and usually longer pods (> 15 mm). Vegetatively *A. amputata* is similar to the inland variant of *A. pulchella* var. *glaberrima* Meisn. (*vide* Maslin 1975: 403) which has a similar distribution, at least for part of its range. These two taxa have numerous, prominent axillary spines and particularly small leaves, however, the new species is distinguished, in addition to the characters given above, by its hairy branchlets and acute to shortly acuminate, dark brown bracteoles. There is a suggestion that these taxa may hybridize in the Lake Grace district (e.g. *K. Newbey* 9485–1, PERTH).

References

- Maslin, B.R. (1975). Studies in the genus *Acacia* (Mimosaceae) – 4. A revision of the series *Pulchellae*. *Nuytsia* 1: 388–492.
- Maslin, B.R. (1979). Studies in the genus *Acacia* (Mimosoideae) – 9. Additional notes on the series *Pulchellae* Benth. *Nuytsia* 2: 354–367.

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